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**SPORTSBIZ** with Darren Rovell

# Sunday Ticket In Your Car? DirecTVAuto Has Arrived

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By: Darren Rovell  
CNBC Sports Business Reporter

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Justin Firestone had just bought an SUV when he heard about a cool product. Four hours later, Firestone had live in-motion television with more than 300 channels in his car. It was love at first sight.

"I couldn't believe how good it was," said Firestone, who used to head up athlete marketing for Marquis Jet. "I was waiting in the parking lot in the car watching TV, while my wife was in the mall shopping."



Firestone, filled with the entrepreneurial spirit, knew he could make this a business. So he found out who made the satellite and made a call. The dish was called TracVision and it was made by a company called KVH Industries.

Soon, Firestone had signed up a distributor agreement with the company. Although KVH had sold more than 150,000 of its small satellites in planes, boats and cars, Firestone realized that the brand he needed was the brand that provided the programming.

"I needed to be associated with the company that was marketing itself with blimps over stadiums and paying entertainers like Beyonce and athletes like A-Rod to promote their logo," Firestone said.

After a conversation with DirecTV's head of business and legal affairs, Ted Suzuki, Firestone was granted a license for his new business, **DirecTVAuto**.

For \$3,995, Firestone's company will provide you with the equipment -- a dish and receiver -- and DirecTV is only \$6 more a month if you are already a **DirecTV** [DTV 43.32 ▲ 0.56 (+1.31%) ] subscriber. The programming you get in your car mirrors what you get in your house.

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Firestone says that 10,000 satellites are currently in cars nationwide, but he thinks he can sell 5,000 more in 2012 alone. He's also getting into the renting business. Early next year, Firestone plans to offer the equipment on a leasing program (for around \$99 a month) and he just signed a deal with Hertz to provide the rental car company with DirecTV Auto in select Cadillac Escalades as part of their entertainment services division, which leases out cars for high-end customers.

"Offering DIRECTV Auto in our Hertz Entertainment Services vehicles supports our goal of providing production and studio companies with state-of-the-art, specialized rental vehicles for all of their needs," said Jordan Reber, senior director at Hertz. "Having the ability to offer satellite television is another way we are providing innovative and superior service to our customers."

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